

REMARKS:

Status of claims

Claims 1-40 are pending in the application. Claims 18-38 and 40 are withdrawn from consideration. In the Office Action dated December 7, 2005, the Examiner objected to the drawings and the specification for informalities, objected to claim 13 for a misspelling, rejected claim 39 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement, rejected claims 4-9 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, rejected claims 1, 2, 4, and 10-17 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Rohs et al. '898, and rejected claim 39 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Rohs et al. '416. These rejections are respectfully traversed in light of the instant amendments.

The objections to the drawings

- a. FIG. 1 was amended to correct a typographical error. Outer wedge 43b was originally mistakenly labeled 436.
- b. FIG. 2 was amended to correct the lead lines for reference numerals 49a and 63.
- c. FIG. 11 has been amended to include a reference numeral for coil spring receiving hole 121.
- d, e. FIG. 14 has been amended to show operating centers S1 and S4 as different from each other, and mean operating radii R1 and R4 as different from each other.
- f, g. FIG. 15 has been amended to show operating centers S2 and S3 as different from each other, and mean operating radii R2 and R3 as different from each other.

The objections to the specification

Paragraph [0084] was amended in accordance with the suggestions of the Examiner.

The objection to claim 13

Claim 13 was amended to correct the misspelling.

The 112 rejections

- 8. The 112 rejection of claim 39 is rendered moot by the amendment to FIG. 15.
- 10. Claim 4 was amended to correct the antecedent basis problem.

The 102(b) rejections under Rohs '898

The Examiner rejected claim 1 and several of its dependents under '898.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation that the inner wedge and the outer wedge are in slidable contact with one another. No new matter was added; see, for example, paragraph [0073].

The elements in '898 referred to by the Examiner as allegedly corresponding to the inventive inner and outer wedges, a pair of thrust pistons 30, do not contact each other. '898's thrust pistons 30 are each guided by contact area 20, guide surface 21 of second subassembly 2, and guide surface 11 of first subassembly 1, not by each other (see paragraph [0039]). It is even possible to omit one of the thrust pistons 30 altogether (paragraph [0047] line 3).

'898 does not disclose or suggest an inner wedge and an outer wedge in slidable contact with one another; for at least this reason, amended claim 1, as well as its dependents, claims 2-17, is patentable over '898.

The 102(e) rejection under Rohs '416

Claim 39 was rejected under '416.

Claim 39 has been amended to include the limitation that the at least one friction member comprises an inner wedge and an outer wedge, wherein the inner wedge and the outer wedge are in slidable contact with one another. No new matter was added; see, for example, paragraph [0073].

'416's friction ring 3, referred to by the Examiner as allegedly corresponding to the inventive friction member, is just that: a ring. It does not comprise wedges.

'416 does not disclose or suggest a friction member comprising an inner wedge and an outer wedge, wherein the inner wedge and the outer wedge are in slidable contact with one another. For at least this reason, claim 39 is patentable over '416.

Conclusions

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Authorization is granted to charge any outstanding fees due at this time for the continued prosecution of this matter to Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP Deposit Account No. 50-0310 (matter no. 060944-0200).

Respectfully submitted,



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